

Strengthening the Research Culture through International Collaborations

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Head – Research Council

What is the role of Academic Development and Quality Assurance Unit at NSBM Green University?

The division takes responsibility in solving educational problems, designing objectives, analyzing, and suggesting innovative ideas, teaching, and learning in order to demonstrate that students have

met standards of international accreditation bodies. It also monitors and evaluates instruments and activities aiming at improvement at the university level. The unit serves one of the key functions at NSBM Green University and it is headed by Prof. Baratha Dodankotuwa and under his guidance, we have not only been able to develop quality assurance systems but also been able to get every academic involved and ensure that all providers of education

are accountable for the quality of their work.

How is the Academic Development and Quality Assurance Unit shaping up for the future for NSBM?

The division has been playing an integral role up-to-now in aligning the overall educational process at



the university. However, as the University now aims to target global accreditation standards such as AACSB as well as have a goal to improve rankings and academic excellence, there is a rearrangement of the internal Academic Development and Quality Assurance Unit to fit into the requirements of global standards. With the support of the respective deans and other heads, we are now aligning

certain processes and making them transparent in areas such as the University: Mission, Vision and Objectives, Strategic Plan, Governance and Decision-Making. We are working on establishing the basic elements for internal quality which ensure that our internal standards are at a satisfactory level to reach global expectations which is our target for the next few years.

How would you describe the place NSBM has provided for research?

NSBM as a university has always grown from strength to strength. Now it has changed and placed the university parallel to other global universities. Also, there is a lot of interest coming from the top management in building



the research culture inside the university. The establishment of the research council dedicated towards the research initially for our fellow academics to search what kind of avenues that they can explore with their knowledge. As well as in the long run we are trying to develop our student body to be engaged in research that is outside their curriculum work. So, building that culture becomes important because people will start realizing doing research is a part and partial of their careers, not simply another job. So that is the kind of culture we have now initiated and we have already seen real positives during this very short period.

What are the unique features of the research council that facilitates an encouraging environment to conduct research?

Research council was established recently. Given the fact that our university is really young, we looked at some of the universities which have grown both locally and internationally. The council has 22 dedicated research centers spread across four faculties. To encourage researchers we have developed a grant process where potential researchers can submit their proposals to the research council, then after a rigorous examination of those proposals we fund to go ahead and conduct the research. Apart from that, since we have established as a research council through our existing networks that we have in other universities; local and foreign, we have initiated some new projects and we are encouraging junior academics to join these projects and get an

experience. And now we have expanded our links with the industry, and are trying to bring research-oriented projects to the university. Also, we have designed a quality framework as well as documentation process from the moment an individual submits the proposal, to request funding. So, I believe, we have now laid the foundation and the platform for new a new research culture.

What are the future plans of the research council for extending opportunities for research within the university?

I think this is something that university takes very seriously from the moment that interest started to grow. We have looked at various avenues, for example, we have started research workshops for academics. Apart from that, we have other sessions conducted by well established academics to share their experience. And for the future, what we believe is to bring in new research projects to show that we are capable, and to attract much more renowned academics from other international universities, I think we have laid the foundation and it is a matter of initiation and creating dedication among internal staff to deliver as promised. So, I think the future for NSBM Green University is very bright and this aligns with other goals of the growth potentials of the university. ■

By Dinusha Sathsarani

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